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The *hiatus* had a similar history: first, no rule: then Ronsard recommends using it sparingly, and Malherbe forbids it, preferring to work three years over a little poem rather than to violate a childish rule and give way to inspiration. All the true poets know exactly when it is right and when it is unnecessary to avoid the principle. Plenty of examples bearing out this statement can be gathered in Mr. Kastner's work.

The foregoing remarks are sufficient to show what one may miss in the book under discussion. Mr. Kastner has been reproached for not having given room enough to the recent French poetical school. He has given Symbolism more attention than most contemporary writers. But what he might have done, if he had allowed himself to be inspired more by the historical spirit, would have been to show that in fact the recent movement was only the logical outcome of the whole evolution of French Versification up to the present day.

We may be very brief with regard to the second part of the book. Chapter VIII, on the "History of the Various French Metrical Lines," is not so rich in data as others. We would like some statistics in proof of the assertions of the author. Chapter IX gives a long enumeration of 'strophes' with the different arrangement of rimes in each one of them. Nothing is said, however, as to their comparative value. Moreover, one does not know whether according to the idea of the author, there is something binding in all those modes of arrangement; in other words, are the 'strophes' to be considered *à forme fixe*, or not? Sometimes one might disagree with the author in his classification. For instance, on page 190 he discusses the strophe of nine lines running thus *aab ccb ddb*, and gives as a variant of it the following one by V. Hugo in *abb bac cca*:

Voici le signal !—
L'enfer nous réclame;
Puisse un jour toute âme
N'avoir d'autre flamme
Que son noir fanal !
Puisse notre ronde,
Dans l'ombre profonde,
Enfermer le monde
D'un cercle infernal !

Would not the arrangement: *a bbb a ccc a* be more satisfactory than the one proposed, and is not this form of the nine line strophe altogether independent of the form quoted above. How can one see a division after the third line, and again after the sixth line?

On pages 184–185 a strophe is misplaced by the printer.

Chapter X is very consistently written. It deals with "Certain fixed forms of French poetry." We miss, however, an example of the classical and graceful form of the rondel of Charles d'Orleans: "*Le temps a laissé son manteau . . . or Dieu qu'il fait bon la regarder . . .*" An imitation by Banville is given on p. 257, showing that Mr. Kastner appreciated the combination.

In the chapter on *Rimeless Poetry* (the last) no word is said of the Symbolists who have been quoted frequently in proper places elsewhere.

In the Bibliography, we note the omission of such books as Remy de Gourmont's *Esthétique de la langue française*, A. Beaunier's *Poésie Nouvelle*, Kahn's *Symbolistes et Décadents*, Vigier Lecoq's *Poésie contemporaine* (which is, however, quoted on page 41), and F. J. A. Davidson, *Ursprung und Geschichte der Ballade*.

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GERMAN LITERATURE.

Gottfried Keller, sa Vie et ses Oeuvres par FERNAND BALDENSPERGER. Paris: Librairie Hachette et Cie, 1899. Pp. iii + 507.

During the last years of his life, Gottfried Keller, without any doubt, had come to be universally considered the most prominent then living writer of fiction in the German speaking world. His pictures of quaint and quiet life in obsolete little Swiss towns during the middle of the nineteenth century, his portraits and caricatures of strange characters, chiefly chosen among the lower class of tradespeople, the sturdiness, the archaic charm and the very provinciality of his vision of life, all this appealed strongly, for a certain while, to a constantly increasing number of readers.

A reaction however has set in. And if Keller was somewhat overrated, he is now beginning to be unduly neglected. This passing wave of popularity has nevertheless, as a fortunate result, brought forward several excellent critical essays on the Zurich novelist. Among them, Bächtold's edition of his letters and diaries stands first and still now contains almost all the literary material needed for the study of Keller's life and writings.

The present volume is a thesis offered in partial fulfillment of the requirements of a doctor's degree at the Sorbonne. It is intended for a public that probably first heard of Keller, when at the time of his death the newspapers mentioned his name. Baldensperger, therefore, not only gives a history of Keller's life and of the origins and sources of his writings, but he gives also a complete and sympathetic argument of all his novels; yet as he says himself (p. III): "une analyse est un commencement de commentaire." Thus in the first part of the volume he prepares the reader for the systematic analysis of Keller's literary character, which occupies the six chapters of the "deuxième partie." These chapters are devoted to an exhaustive discussion of Keller's "helvétisme," his "romantisme," his "sens de la vue," his "humeur," and his "style et langue;" to them is added a final chapter "conclusions" in which the results of this analysis are summed up. This part of the volume is obviously the most important one; it contains practically everything that could be said about Keller's literary personality and it is mostly well said. It seems, however, somewhat exaggerated if Baldensperger says (p. 466) "La phrase de Keller est considérée par les meilleurs juges comme un modèle de prose allemande," and "Ses phrases, souvent fort longues et composées de propositions nombreuses et dépendantes, ne donnent presque jamais l'impression d'enchevêtrement que produit si souvent la prose allemande." No doubt Keller's vocabulary was practically unlimited and he always knew how to find the most expressive term. But he was drawing his words from all possible sources and his taste was sometimes more than catholic. The words he uses, his metaphors and the scenes he describes are sometimes deplorably coarse, and passages like the one on page 91 of vol. I of the *Leute von Seldwyla*¹ are unfortu-

nately no isolated exceptions. And the beauty of his narrative is often seriously marred by sentences of the following kind: "Beide aber trafen zusammen in der Überzeugung, dass der andere, den anderen so frech und plump übervorteilend, ihn notwendig für einen verächtlichen Dummkopf halten müsse, da man dergleichen etwa einem armen haltlosen Teufel, nicht aber einem aufrechten, klugen und wehrhaften Manne gegenüber sich erlauben könne, und jeder sah sich in seiner wunderlichen Ehre gekränkt und gab sich rückhaltlos der Leidenschaft des Streites und dem daraus erfolgendem Verfall hin, und ihr Leben glich fortan der träumerischen Qual zweier Verdammten, welche auf einem schmalen Brette einen dunklen Strom hinabtreibend sich befahlen, in die Luft hauen und sich selber anpacken und vernichten, in der Meinung, sie hätten ihr Unglück gefasst;" or: "Denn das Fleckchen Erde mit dem Steinhäufen darüber, auf welchem bereits wieder ein Wald von Nesseln und Disteln blühte, war nur noch der erste Keim oder der Grundstein einer verworrenen Geschichte und Lebensweise, in welcher die zwei Funfzigjährigen noch neue Gewohnheiten und Sitten, Grundsätze und Hoffnungen annahmen, als sie bisher geübt." ² To call such passages models of German prose is to do injustice to authors like Heine, Nietzsche, Hartleben or others, with whom the writing of artistic German has never been a lost art.

Otherwise, Baldensperger's analysis is entirely plausible, and the whole book is a most creditable specimen of the kind of criticism of German literature which is now being practised at the best French universities.

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SCANDINAVIAN POPULAR SONGS.

Les Vieux Chants Populaires Scandinaves (Gamle Nordiske Folkeviser) par LÉON PINEAU. ii. Epoque Barbare. Paris: 1901. 8vo., 584 pp.

The author has made a diligent study of the folklore, not only of the Scandinavians, but of

² *Die Leute von Seldwyla*. Berlin, 1887, vol. I, pp. 80 and 81.

¹ 5te Auflage. Berlin, 1887.